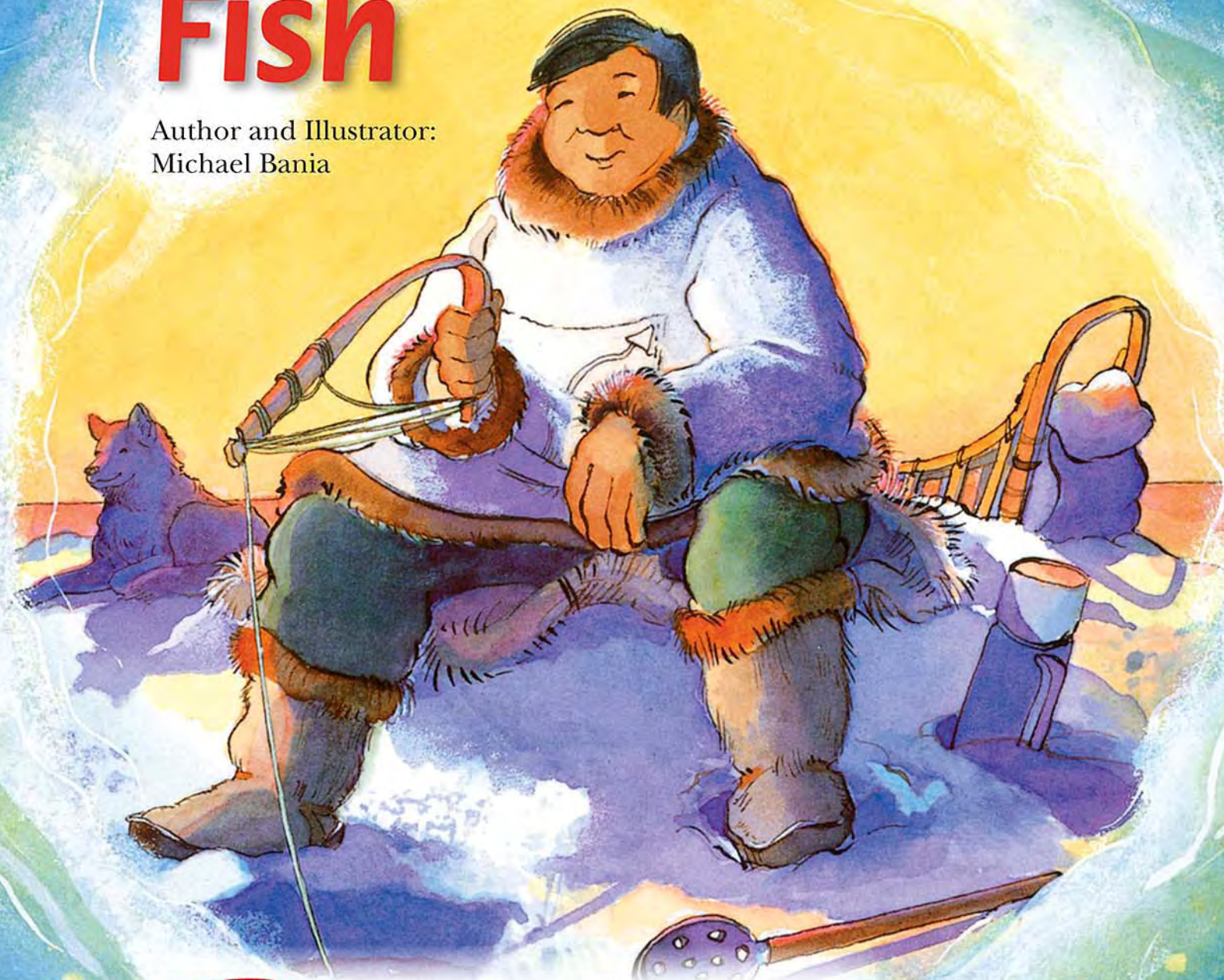


Kumak's Fish

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What happens when
Kumak and his family
go fishing?



Genre

A **Tall Tale** is a story that uses exaggeration.
What is exaggerated in this story?

On a beautiful Arctic morning Kumak looked out the window of his house. Through the willows he could see the sun rising over the frozen river.

“Ahhh, spring,” said Kumak to his family.

“The days are long. The nights are short, and the ice is still hard. *Good day for fish.*”

“*Good day for fish,*” said Kumak’s wife, pulling on her warm parka.

“*Good day for fish,*” said his wife’s mother, pulling on her warm mukluks.

“*Good day for fish,*” said his sons and daughters, pulling on their warm beaver hats and fur-lined gloves.





Kumak packed his fishing gear on his sled. He packed his wife on the sled. He packed his wife's mother on the sled. He packed his sons and daughters on the sled. And then, in the safest place of all, Kumak packed his Uncle Aglu's amazing hooking stick.

Everyone in the village knew of Uncle Aglu's amazing hooking stick. Uncle Aglu had carved it many years ago out of a piece of fine willow, and each spring he caught more fish than anyone in the village.

But this spring, Uncle Aglu's legs were stiff. He told Kumak to use the amazing hooking stick.

This was Kumak's lucky day!

When they reached the great, frozen lake past the mouth of the river, Kumak's family dug their fishing holes and sat down to wait.

Kumak and his family sat for a long time. They were quiet. They were patient. They scooped away the ice growing around their fishing holes.



Just as the sun was starting to turn down for the day, Kumak's oldest son caught a fish. Then Kumak's two daughters each caught a fish.

Soon his wife and his wife's mother each caught a fish. "Good day for fish!" they said.

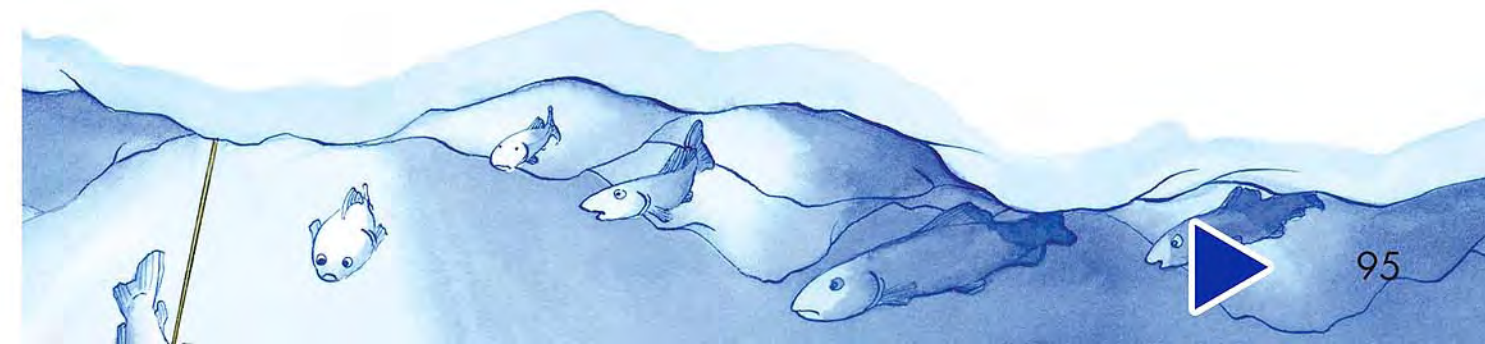


Kumak was quiet. He was patient. He scooped away the ice growing around his fishing hole.

Suddenly, Uncle Aglu's amazing hooking stick began to twitch. It twitched this way. It twitched that way.

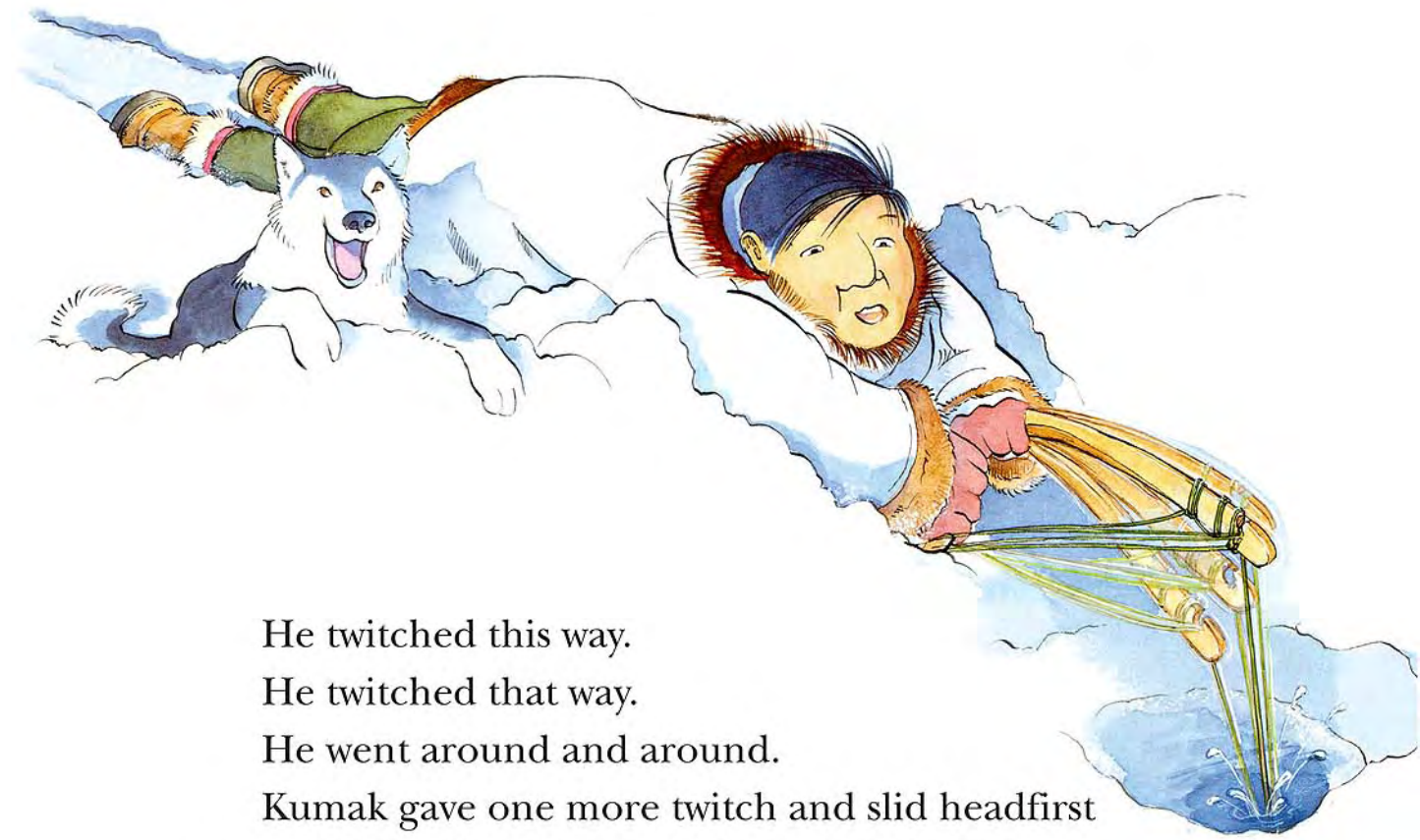
It went around and around.

It gave one more twitch, then yanked Kumak toward the fishing hole. "What a big fish!" said Kumak's wife. "Biggest I can remember!" said his wife's mother. "The biggest fish ever!" said his sons and daughters.





They danced with joy, thinking about the happy faces of the villagers when they brought the fish home. Just then, Kumak began to twitch.

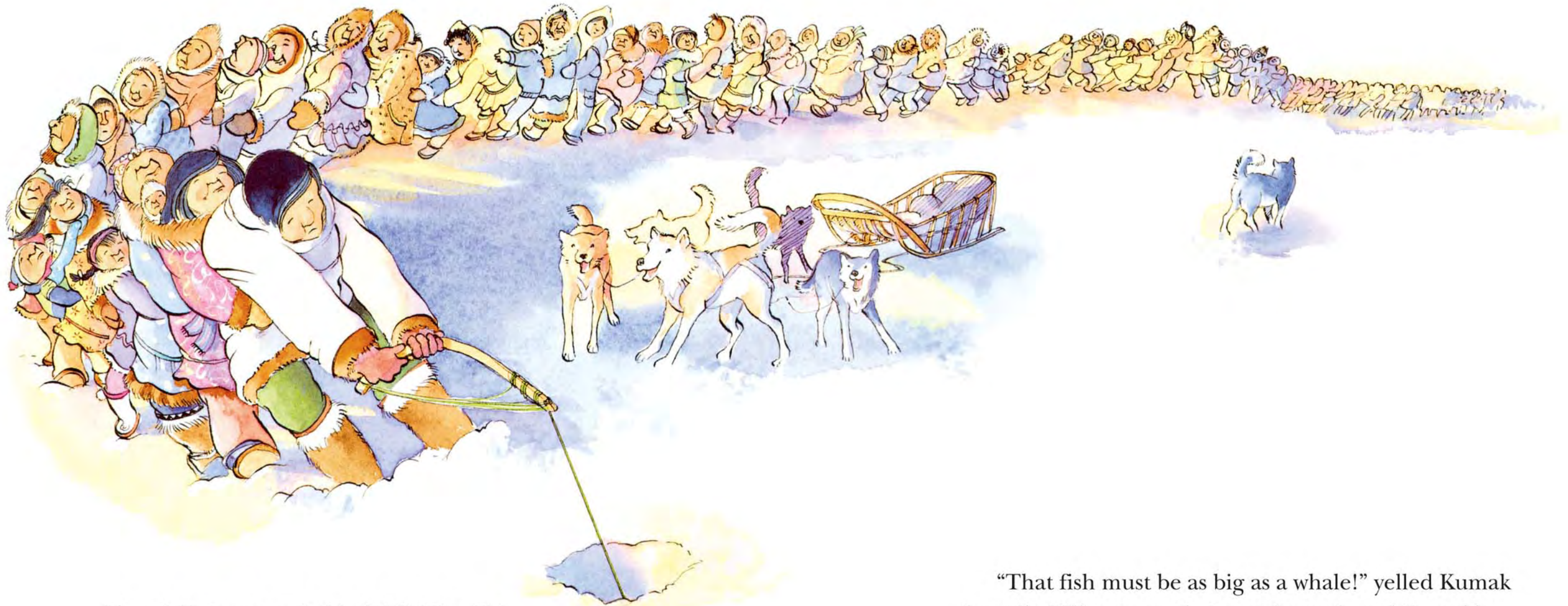


He twitched this way.
He twitched that way.
He went around and around.
Kumak gave one more twitch and slid headfirst toward the fishing hole and the icy water below.



“Wife! Help me pull this fish!”
Kumak’s wife grabbed him around the waist and together they took two steps back.
“That fish must be as big as a seal!” yelled Kumak happily.





“Aana! Help me pull this fish!” His wife’s mother ran to help. She took hold of Kumak’s wife and together they took three steps back. “That fish must be as big as a walrus!” yelled Kumak happily.

“Children! Help me pull this fish!” His sons and daughters ran to help. They lined up, one behind the other, and never let go. Together they took six more steps, but the stick pulled them all the way back to the edge of the hole.

“That fish must be as big as a whale!” yelled Kumak happily. Villagers on their way home heard Kumak’s shouts and ran to help. They lined up behind Kumak’s family and holding on tight to the person in front of them, they pulled and pulled. But no matter how many steps they took away from the hole, they always ended up back where they started.

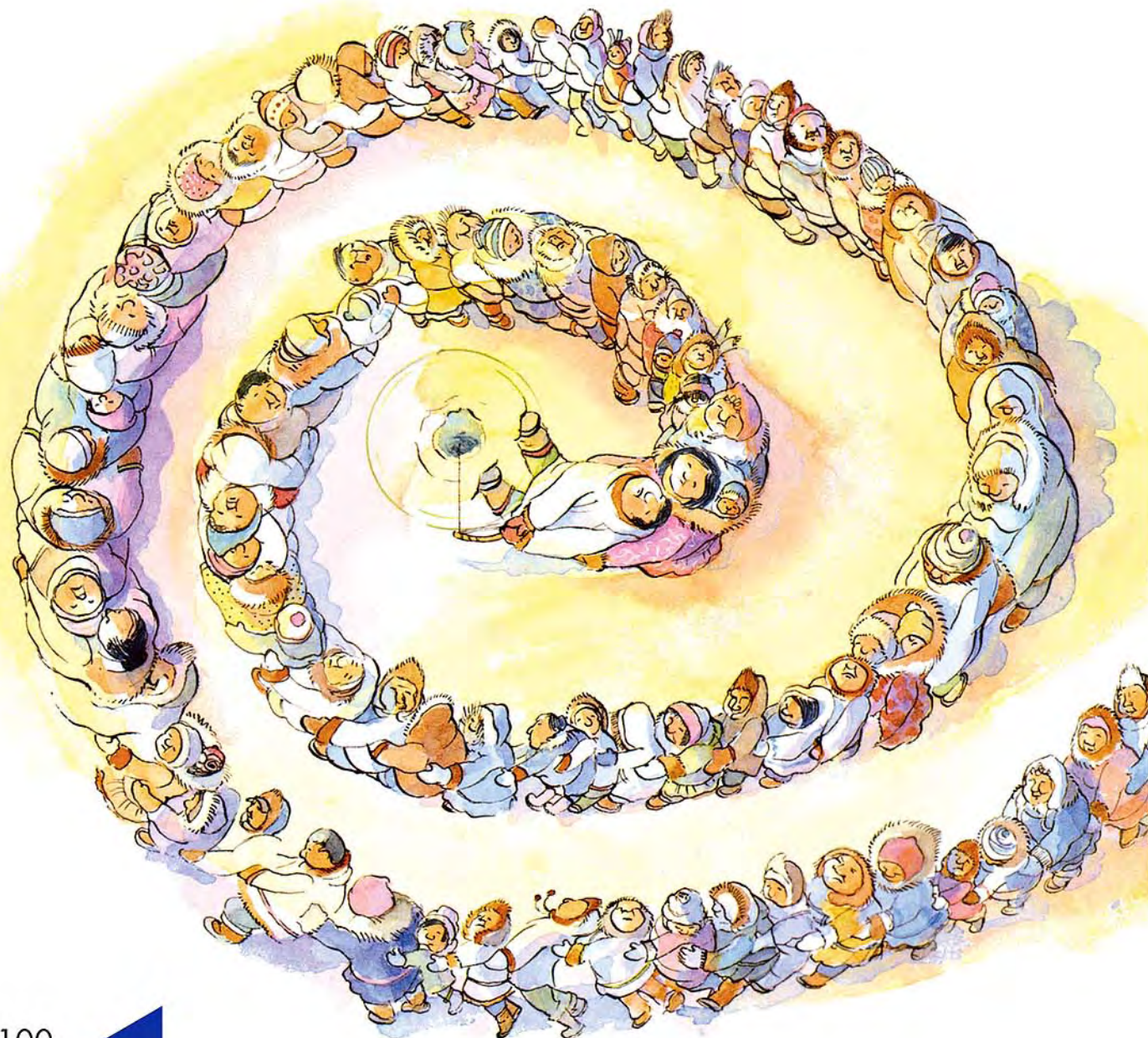
Soon the whole village heard about Kumak’s fish and came to help. In one long line stretching across the frozen lake, they pulled and pulled and **PULLED!**



Once again, Uncle Aglu's amazing hooking stick began to twitch. It twitched this way, and all the people of the village twitched this way.

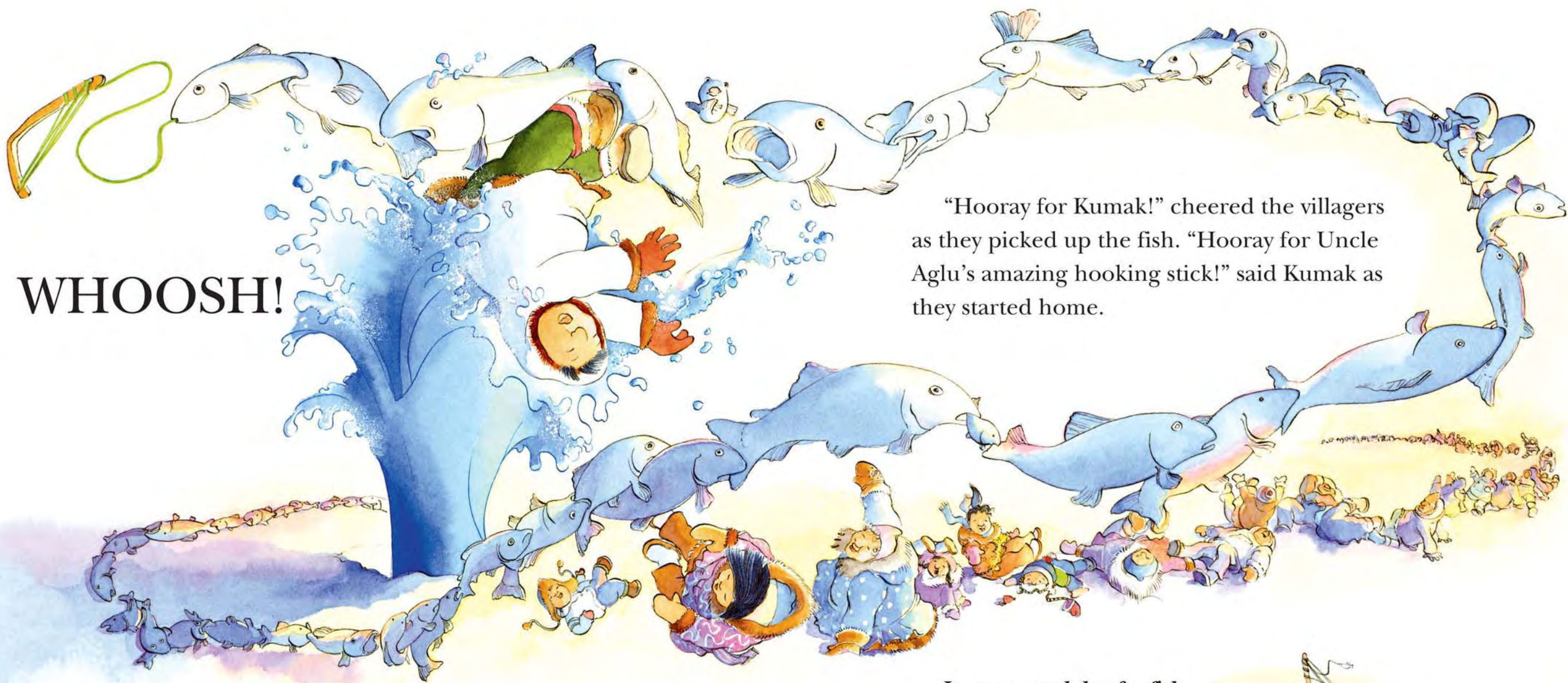
It twitched that way, and all the people of the village twitched that way.

It went around and around, and all the people of the village went around and around.



Uncle Aglu's amazing hooking stick gave one more enormous twitch and pulled Kumak down the fishing hole and into the icy water below!

Kumak's family and the villagers didn't give up. Each person held on tight to the person in front of them and never let go. All together, they gave one more mighty pull and ...



WHOOSH!

“Hooray for Kumak!” cheered the villagers as they picked up the fish. “Hooray for Uncle Aglu’s amazing hooking stick!” said Kumak as they started home.

Kumak came flying back out of the fishing hole. Uncle Aglu’s amazing hooking stick came flying out with him.

Stretched out in one long line, all around Kumak and the fishing hole, were hundreds of fish! Each fish held on tight to the one in front of it and never let go. Kumak had landed enough fish for the entire village to have a splendid feast.

It was a good day for fish.

